Visa Desk System at IGI Airport

3926. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Customs Department at IGI Airport, New Delhi has been recently equipped with Visa Desk System to identify frequent offenders;

(b) whether a similar system was operational at the above airport some years back;

(c) if so, the reasons for this system being discontinued/dismantled and the person who authorised its discontinuation;

(d) whether it was removed without any authorisation and if so, the name(s) of Additional Commissioner/Commissioners of Customs during whose tenure this system was unauthorisedly removed; and

(e) what action Government propose to take against the erring officers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The Customs Visadex System at the IGI Airport linked with Immigration Centralised Visadex System had developed certain software problems and went into disuse sometime in the later half of 1997. It took time in resorting connectivity between the Customs and the Immigration computers, based upon sound-dex principle. During the period the computerised linkage and exchange of information was not operative, alerts issued by the DRI were kept in Master folder and referred to for follow-up checks of particular suspect passengers. Similarly, local alerts were also being monitored as and when the situation demanded and even help of the Immigration Authorities taken. There were no orders issued for discontinuation of the Customs Visadex System.

(e) Does not arise in view of the position stated at (c) and (d) above. However, the reasons for non-operation and steps required to make the system effectively functional are being further examined in coordination with immigration Authorities.

Loans to Cinema Industry

3927. SHRI S.S. CHANDRAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of loans provided to cinema Industry under various schemes;